



Kelley Girl Charters Reminds Anglers: 2026 Red Snapper Season Closes October 25

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The 2026 Red Snapper season in Gulf waters off Florida's coast closes October 25. Kelley Girl Charters, a family-owned fishing charter company based in Panama City Beach, is booking trips for anglers looking to catch the species before the season ends.

Kelley Girl Charters holds a federal reef fish permit, allowing the company to fish for red snapper under the federal season schedule. Some smaller charter operators fish under state-only licensing, and their red snapper seasons have already closed for the summer.

Florida's red snapper season reopens September 1 for a limited fall season. Charter captains follow the minimum red snapper size limit and bag limit for each fishing charter. Kelley Girl Charters trips with a federal permit keep the fishing window open for their guests through October 25, 2026.

"We've spent years working to help the Gulf's Red Snapper population grow, from the reefs we've helped

build to how we fish today," said Captain Mark Kelley of Kelley Girl Charters. "Having a federal permit lets us keep sharing that with our guests even as the red snapper season winds down for other fishing charter operators."

Red snapper is one of the Gulf's most popular game fish, known for its size, strength, and quality as table fare. Kelley Girl Charters runs bottom-fishing trips to reefs and structures where red snapper populations are established, and anglers on these trips also commonly catch grouper, amberjack, and triggerfish. Trips run a minimum of six hours, giving anglers time to reach productive offshore fishing grounds.

The fishing charter company operates two fishing boats: The Kelley Girl, a 52-foot vessel, and The Lady Kelley, a 55-foot vessel, each accommodating up to 20 anglers. Both boats have restrooms and air conditioning, and both exceed U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Photos of both vessels are available on the Kelley Girl Charters boat pages.

"Red snapper fishing is the highlight of summer on the Gulf," said Captain Kelley. "We can bring up to 20 people on our boats, which makes fishing with large groups and families fun. And since we know where the fish are biting, we can navigate to more fishing reefs during longer charter trips."

Panama City Beach has one of the largest fishing fleets on the Gulf Coast, with charter operators offering trips ranging from short nearshore outings to full-day and overnight deep-sea trips. Kelley Girl Charters, operating in the Gulf and off Florida's coast for more than 35 years, accommodates both beginners and experienced anglers.

Kelley Girl Charters has also participated in reef-building efforts in the Gulf, including sinking decommissioned poultry transports to create artificial reef habitat. These structures support fish populations over time, including red snapper, by giving young fish and baitfish places to shelter and feed. Mature red snapper are most likely to live among the reefs while younger red snapper stay around the sandy bottom.

"October 25th is the last chance to harvest Red Snapper this year," Captain Kelley said. "End of summer and the fall are some of the busiest times for the fishing season, and our boats fill up quickly."

Based in Panama City, Florida, Kelley Girl Charters is a family-owned and operated fishing charter company with more than three decades of experience in the Gulf of Mexico. Led by Captain Mark Kelley and Captain Carson Kelley, the company operates two vessels, The Kelley Girl and The Lady Kelley, and offers deep-sea fishing, bottom fishing, and big-game charter trips. For more information or to book a fishing charter trip, visit their website.

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Kelley Girl Charters

Kelley Girl Charters is a family-owned deep-sea fishing charter based in Panama City, Florida, with 30+ years of fishing experience and offering private charter fishing trips, trolling, shark fishing, and bottom fishing in the Gulf near Panama City Beach.

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